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ABSTRACT

This survey is a replication of a November 1974 survey undertaken to determine the number of children in Vancouver schools for whom English is a second language, the extent of their English language handicaps, and their placement needs. The same questionnaire used in the earlier survey was directed to Vancouver school principals. This questionnaire called for the identification of all students for whom English is a second language and for their first languages. Teachers rated these student on their English language skills and estimated the help each student needed. All 76 elementary and 18 secondary schools responded. English is a second language for nearly 40% of the elementary enrollment and approximately 28% of the secondary enrollment. Other findings include: (1) 63% of these ESL students have needs that can be met in the regular classroom; (2) 27.1% need additional support in language instruction; (3) 6.5% require placement in a special ESL class; and (4) 2.2% require special help in addition to placement in an ESL class. The students' first languages include Chinese, Italian, East Indian languages, German, Portuguese, and Greek. The data also indicate that fewer students need special help, and that more can be served in the regular classroom than at the time of the earlier survey. A sample questionnaire is appended. (Author/AM)

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RESEARCH REPORT

SURVEY OF PUPILS IN VANCOUVER SCHOOLS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE

(A Replication of the Survey for the Task Force on English)

May 18, 1977

E.N. Ellis

Research Report 77-01

Department of Evaluation and Research
Board of School Trustees
1595 West 10th Avenue
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SURVEY OF PUPILS IN VANCOUVER SCHOOLS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

(A Replication of the Survey for the Task Force on English)

ABSTRACT

This report describes a replication of a survey undertaken for the Task Force on English to determine the number of children in Vancouver schools for whom English is a second language. It reports the extent to which these children are handicapped in their use of the English language and identifies their placement needs within the school system. Questionnaires were distributed to all school principals and their responses are summarized in the report.

There are nearly 22,000 pupils in Vancouver for whom English is a second language; nearly 40% of the elementary enrolment and approximately 28% of the secondary enrolment. These data represent an increase from 34% and 21%, respectively, in the earlier survey.

There is a great range in the language abilities of the group. The majority can meet tolerably well the English language requirements of most day-to-day situations but a considerable number are unable to read or write any English. Listening and speaking abilities are higher than those of reading and writing; and in that order.

Teachers report that:

63.7% of these E.S.L. students have needs that can be met in the regular classroom and, in addition, another
27.1% can be served in the regular class with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre),
6.5% require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and
2.2% require special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.
For 0.6% there was no statement of placement needs.

The rank order of the "first languages" of these students is unchanged. Chinese is the first language for 43% of these students. Italian, East Indian languages, German, Portuguese and Greek are the first languages for another 37%. There are noteworthy increases in the numbers of students speaking Chinese, East Indian languages and Portuguese.

In comparing the findings with those of the earlier survey, teachers expressed the opinion that:

- a greater number (and a larger percentage) of E.S.L. students can be served within the regular classroom,

- fewer students (less than half the number in the first survey) require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and

- fewer students (and a smaller percentage) need special help in addition to such segregated placements.

The data suggest that:

(1) there is an increasing readiness to provide for E.S.L. students within the regular classroom
(2) the support services (such as those provided in English Language Centres) are valued and will be sought with increasing frequency, and
(3) the need persists for placement of students in E.S.L. classes and some of these students need special help in addition to such placement.

SURVEY OF PUPILS IN VANCOUVER SCHOOLS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

(A Replication of the Survey for the Task Force on English)

Introduction

A Task Force on English, established in June, 1974, directed attention to the special needs of those pupils for whom English is a second language. In addition to the large number of immigrant children, there are many other Canadian children from non-English speaking homes who have limited facility in English.

In response to the need of the Task Force for reliable data on the extent of the problem, a survey was undertaken in November, 1974,

- to determine the number of children for whom English is a second language,
- to learn of the extent to which these children are handicapped in their listening, speaking, reading and writing of English, and
- to identify their placement needs.

The findings of that survey are summarized in Research Report 75-23 of January 21, 1975.

In the intervening twenty-nine months, more immigrant families have come to Vancouver and the need persists to provide for students for whom English is a second language. In order to obtain current data and to determine trends, the survey of November, 1974 was repeated in April, 1977.

Procedures

The same questionnaire as that used in the earlier survey (See Appendix A) was directed to all school principals. It called for the identification of all students for whom English is a second language and for the listing of their first languages. Teachers rated their abilities to use English in listening, speaking, reading and writing and estimated how much help each student needed. Returns were received from all of the 76 elementary schools and 18 secondary schools.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF RETURNS FROM 76 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

TOTAL ENROLMENT - 35,727

1. No. of pupils for whom English is a second language - 14,162 (39.6%)

2. "First Languages"

LANGUAGES	NO.	%	LANGUAGES	NO.	%
Chinese languages	5665	40.0	Japanese	346	2.4
East Indian lang.	1875	13.2	Fijian	296	2.1
Italian	1765	12.5	Spanish	216	1.5
Portuguese	824	5.8	Korean	202	1.4
Greek	649	4.6	French	166	1.2
German	625	4.4	All Others (each less than 1%)	590	4.2
Serbo-Croatian	394	2.8			
Malayo-Polynesian languages	355	2.5	No Response	194	1.4

3. Distributions of Ratings - Language Abilities

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Number of "5"'s	0.6%	0.8%	2.0%	1.4%
4 's	7.9%	8.3%	11.5%	8.6%
3 's	15.6%	16.5%	19.7%	20.5%
2 's	26.4%	30.1%	20.4%	29.8%
1 's	48.4%	43.1%	35.5%	28.6%
No Response	1.1%	1.2%	11.0%	11.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.1%	99.9%

4. Distribution of Placement Needs

	NO.	%
Number of A's (The student's needs can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom.)	8,742	61.7%
Number of B's (The student's needs can be met in the regular classroom with additional support in language instruction.)	4,019	28.4%
Number of C's (This student requires placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class.)	959	6.8%
Number of D's (This student requires special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.)	367	2.6%
No Response	75	0.5%
TOTAL	14,162	100.0%

Findings

a) Returns from Elementary Schools

In these 76 schools which have a total enrolment of 35,727, there are 14,162 pupils for whom English is a second language. This is 39.6% of the enrolment.

Chinese is the "first language" for 40.0% of these children. East Indian languages account for 13.2%. Other first languages in rank order are Italian (12.5%), Portuguese (5.8%), Greek (4.6%) and German (4.4%).

The distribution of ratings for each of the language abilities covers the entire range and it is skewed with a greater frequency of high ratings than lower ones. Listening and speaking abilities were rated above reading and writing, and in that order. The typical student was rated "2" on each ability-scale, i.e. he is able to cope with the literacy demands of most day-to-day situations. However, he will require time and may make a few errors.

Teachers report that

61.7% of these E.S.L. students have needs that can be met in the regular classroom and, in addition, another
28.4% can be served in the regular class with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre),
6.8% require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and
2.6% require special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.

For 0.5% there was no statement of placement needs.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF RETURNS FROM 18 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

TOTAL ENROLMENT - 27,572

1. No. of pupils for whom English is a second language - 7,655 (27.8%)

2. "First Languages"

LANGUAGES	NO.	%	LANGUAGES	NO.	%
Chinese languages	3789	49.5	Malayo-Polynesian languages	154	2.0
Italian	775	10.1	Fijian	137	1.8
German	618	8.1	Serbo-Croatian	130	1.7
East Indian lang.	597	7.8	French	124	1.6
Portuguese	297	3.9	Spanish	95	1.2
Japanese	166	2.2	All Others (each less than 1%)	457	6.0
Greek	154	2.0	No Response	162	2.1

3. Distributions of Ratings - Language Abilities

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Number of "5"'s	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
4 's	2.1%	2.6%	2.4%	2.1%
3 's	6.7%	8.3%	12.0%	12.8%
2 's	19.1%	25.6%	26.8%	34.7%
1 's	71.4%	63.3%	57.9%	49.6%
No Response	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.5%
Total	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

4. Distribution of Placement Needs

	NO.	%
Number of A's (The student's needs can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom.)	5,147	67.2%
Number of B's (The student's needs can be met in the regular classroom with additional support in language instruction.)	1,888	24.7%
Number of C's (This student requires placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class.)	460	6.0%
Number of D's (This student requires special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.)	103	1.3%
No Response	57	0.7%
TOTAL	7,655	99.9%

b) Returns from Secondary Schools

Returns were received from the eighteen secondary schools and these are summarized in Table 2.

In these eighteen schools (total enrolment 27,572) there are 7,655 students for whom English is a second language. This is 27.8% of the enrolment.

For approximately half of these students, their "first language" is Chinese (49.5%). For one-tenth of the group, the first language is Italian (10.1%), while for another 8.1% it is German. East Indian languages account for another 7.8% and Portuguese 3.9%.

The distribution of ratings for each of the language abilities covers the entire range and it is even more negatively skewed than the distribution for elementary pupils. Generally, "listening" is rated highest, "speaking" second best, "reading" third, and "writing" is lowest of the four. The typical student is rated in the highest category and functions quite satisfactorily in 'listening', 'speaking' and 'reading' but is rated in the second category for 'writing'.

Teachers report that

67.2% of these E.S.L. students have needs that can be met in the regular classroom and, in addition, another
24.7% can be served in the regular class with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre),
6.0% require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and
1.3% require special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.
For 0.7% there was no statement of placement needs.

TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF RETURNS FROM 76 ELEMENTARY AND 18 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

TOTAL ENROLMENT - 63,299

1. No. of pupils for whom English is a second language - 21,817 (34.5%)

2. "First Languages"

LANGUAGES	NO.	%	LANGUAGES	NO.	%
Chinese languages	9454	43.3	Malayo-Polynesian languages	509	2.3
Italian	2540	11.6	Fijian	433	2.0
East Indian lang.	2472	11.3	Spanish	311	1.4
German	1243	5.7	French	290	1.3
Portuguese	1121	5.1	Korean	250	1.1
Greek	803	3.7	All Others (each less than 1%)	999	4.6
Serbo-Croatian	524	2.4	No Response	356	1.6
Japanese	512	2.3			

3. Distributions of Ratings - Language Abilities

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Number of "5"'s	0.5%	0.6%	1.4%	1.0%
4 's	5.8%	6.3%	8.3%	6.3%
3 's	12.5%	13.6%	17.0%	17.8%
2 's	23.9%	28.5%	22.6%	31.5%
1 's	56.4%	50.2%	43.3%	36.0%
No Response	0.9%	0.8%	7.4%	7.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%

4. Distribution of Placement Needs	NO.	%
Number of A's (The student's needs can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom.)	13,889	63.7%
Number of B's (The student's needs can be met in the regular classroom with additional support in language instruction.)	5,907	27.1%
Number of C's (This student requires placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class.)	1,419	6.5%
Number of D's (This student requires special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.)	470	2.2%
No Response	132	0.6%
TOTAL	21,817	100.1%

c) Returns from Elementary and Secondary Schools (Combined)

When the returns from elementary and secondary schools are combined, (see Table 3) there is a total of 21,817 pupils for whom English is a second language. This represents 34.5% of the enrolment.

Chinese is the "first language" for nearly one-half of these students (43.3%). Other "first languages" in rank order are Italian (11.6%), East Indian languages (11.3%), German (5.7%), and Portuguese (5.1%). These were the most frequent at both elementary and secondary levels.

There is a great range in the language abilities of the group. The majority can meet tolerably well the English language requirements of most day-to-day situations but a considerable number are unable to read or write any English. Listening and speaking abilities are higher than those of reading and writing; and in that order.

Teachers report that

63.7% of these E.S.L. students have needs that can be met in the regular classroom and, in addition, another
27.1% can be served in the regular class with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre),
6.5% require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and
2.2% require special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.

For 0.6% there was no statement of placement needs.

Summary of Trends

In the intervening 29 months, there has been an increase in the number of students (and in the percentage of enrolment) for whom English is a second language. (See Table 4)

Table 4

Comparison of Survey Data - Students for whom English is a Second Language

	November 1974	April 1977	Increase (29 months)
Elementary Schools			
Number of Students	13,005	14,162	1,157
Percent of Enrolment	33.9%	39.6%	5.7%
Secondary Schools			
Number of Students	5,850	7,655	1,805
Percent of Enrolment	20.7%	27.8%	7.1%
All Schools			
Number of Students	18,855	21,817	2,962
Percent of Enrolment	28.3%	34.5%	6.2%

The rank order of the "first languages" of these students is unchanged. There are noteworthy increases in the numbers of students speaking Chinese, East Indian languages and Portuguese. (See Table 5)

Table 5

Distribution of First Languages of "E.S.L." Students

First Language		November 1974 (N= 18,855)	April 1977 (N= 21,817)	Change (+ 2,962)
Chinese Languages	Number	8,042	9,454	+ 1412
	Percent	42 7%	43.3%	+ 0.6%
Italian	Number	2,495	2,540	+ 45
	Percent	13.2%	11.6%	- 1.6%
East Indian Languages	Number	1,712	2,472	+ 760
	Percent	9.1%	11.3%	+ 2.2%
German	Number	1,392	1,243	- 149
	Percent	7.4%	5.7%	- 1.7%
Portuguese	Number	914	1,121	+ 207
	Percent	4.8%	5.1%	+ 0.3%
Greek	Number	717	803	+ 86
	Percent	3.8%	3.7%	- 0.1%

The distributions of language abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing are comparable when allowance is made for the fact that in the more recent survey no ratings were made of the reading and writing abilities of many kindergarten and some first year pupils.

Responses from the present survey indicate that

13,889 students (63.7%) have needs that can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom

5,907 students (27.1%) can be served in the regular class with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre)

1,419 students (6.5%) require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class

and 470 students (2.2%) require special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class.

While a direct comparison cannot be made of the placement needs of E.S.L. students in the two surveys because the response categories were not identical, it is clear that in the opinion of teachers that, in comparison with the earlier survey:

- a greater number (and a larger percentage) of E.S.L. students can be served within the regular classroom,
- fewer students (less than half the number in the first survey) require placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class, and
- fewer students (and a smaller percentage) need special help in addition to such segregated placements.

Discussion

These data suggest that:

(1) there is an increasing readiness to provide for E.S.L. students within the regular classroom
(2) the support services (such as those provided in English Language Centres) are valued and will be sought with increasing frequency, and
(3) the need persists for placement of students in E.S.L. classes and some of these students need special help in addition to such placement.

Vancouver School Board 1595 W. 10th Ave. V6J 1Z8 • 731-1131

February 28, 1977

APPENDIX A (1)

TO: ALL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

You will recall that in November, 1974, the Task Force on English made a study of the language needs of students, paying particular attention to those children for whom English is a second language. Since that time changes have occurred and it is important that we have an up-to-date picture of the situation in order that we can document the extent of present needs. A committee of officials has been appointed to assess the situation and make recommendations. The committee asked that Evaluation and Research Services gather the required data.

The purpose of this survey, then, is to determine the number of students for whom English is a second language and the extent of their language handicaps. Please choose the best means of obtaining the information that is required. It might be through the homeroom teacher or from the teacher of English. In either case, this teacher should respond on the form provided.

In the first column, the teacher should list the names of those pupils for whom English is a second language, i.e. pupils who may have already learned another language before learning English or who learnt another language simultaneously with English. In the second column, the teacher should identify the child's first language.

The teacher should rate in columns 3, 4, 5, and 6, the language abilities of the pupil in listening, speaking, reading and writing using the five point scale that accompanies the record sheet.

In the 7th column, teachers are asked to indicate how much help the student needs in terms of (A, B, C, or D).

(A) The student's needs that can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom
(B) The student's needs that can be met in the regular classroom with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre)
(C) This student requires placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class
(D) This student requires special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class

When the returns from your teachers are complete, please summarize them on the form provided. (Returns from annexes should be included with those from the main school.) The summary form, together with the teachers' returns, should reach this office by April 30, 1977.

A summary for the entire school district will be compiled and a copy will be sent to your school. Your assistance and the cooperation of your staff is genuinely appreciated.

Norm Ellis

Norm Ellis
Head, Evaluation and Research Services

ENE/lb
cc All Teachers

Community Education
Communications
Curriculum
Evaluation & Research
Planning & Administration
Professional Development
Student Services

APPENDIX A (2)

SCALES FOR THE RATING OF LANGUAGE ABILITIES

LISTENING

1. Can understand radio, telephone, and face-to-face conversations.
2. Can understand most natural conversation. Has difficulty with idiomatic speech.
3. Can generally understand natural conversation; will often require repetition and rewording.
4. Can understand only basic conversations with low content and few idioms.
5. Cannot understand any English.

SPEAKING

1. Can function on the telephone or in face-to-face conversation with no major structural or pronunciation errors.
2. Can function in normal conversation; has some structural and pronunciation errors, though meaning can be easily discerned.
3. Can function in normal conversation with hesitation--may have to repeat and reword what he/she says; has many structural and/or pronunciation errors.
4. Can communicate needs, but is limited to simple phrases. Is often incomprehensible in normal conversation; has many structural and pronunciation errors.
5. Cannot speak any English.

READING

1. Can read anything in the newspapers, and should be able to read materials related to his/her work. Is generally at a reading level comparable his/her age.
2. Can read anything in the newspapers and should be able to read materials related to his work. Will require time and a dictionary.
3. Can read some things in the newspapers with difficulty. Will require time and a dictionary. Occasionally misinterprets and misunderstands.
4. Can read only those exercises which have been drilled orally in class.
5. Cannot read English.

WRITING

1. Can write many prose types--description, exposition, argument--without significant structural or stylistic errors.
2. Can write letters, memos. Can carry on day to day writing requirements of adult life (lists, cheques, applications, etc.) - without significant structural errors.
3. Can write textbook exercises. Is incomprehensible in a free writing situation.
4. Can copy.
5. Cannot write English script.

SCALE FOR THE RATING OF PLACEMENT NEEDS

(A) The student's needs can be met in the regular program within the regular classroom

(B) The student's needs can be met in the regular classroom with additional support in language instruction (such as that provided in an English Learning Centre

(C) This student requires placement in a special English-as-a-second-language class

(D) This student requires special help in addition to placement in an English-as-a-second-language class

APPENDIX A (3)

SURVEY -- PUPILS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Name	First Language	TEACHER'S RATING OF STUDENT'S ABILITIES (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5)				Placement Needs (A,B,C, or D)
		Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	

APPENDIX A (4)

PLEASE RETURN THIS SUMMARY FORM BY APRIL 30, 1977, TO E.N. ELLIS, HEAD, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH SERVICES, VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD.

SUMMARY OF RETURNS FROM _____ SCHOOL
(including Annex, if any)

1. No. of pupils for whom English is a second language _____*

2. "First" Languages

Language (list)	Number*
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Distributions of Ratings -- Language Abilities (columns 3, 4, 5, 6)

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Number of "5"'s				
4 's				
3 's				
2 's				
1 's				
Total*				

4. Distribution of Placement Needs (column 7)

Number of A's _____
B's _____
C's _____
D's _____
Total* _____

*Totals should agree with item 1.

Date _____, 19____ _____
Principal